

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-24 are pending in the application.

Claims 1, 13-16, 18, 19, 21, and 24 have been amended. Support for the claim amendments can be found throughout the specification.

Claim 25 has been added.

This paper and the accompanying Request for Continued Examination (RCE) are being submitted in response to the Final Office Action dated July 1, 2005, wherein all claims stand rejected in light of U.S. Patent No. 5,419,717 issued to Abendschein et al. ("Abendschein") either under 35 U.S.C. § 102 or in combination with one or more other references under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

Applicants would like to thank Examiner Nasri for taking the time to conduct the telephonic Examiner Interview on August 29, 2005. Examiner Nasri's insight into the substance of the pending rejections was helpful. In addition, agreement was reached as to the extent of the disclosure of the Abendschein reference and therefore its inapplicability to certain of the dependent claims, as is discussed more fully below. Applicants believe that the amendments presented in this paper reflect the discussions presented during the Interview.

Independent Claims 1, 13, and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in light of Abendschein. Applicants have amended independent Claims 1, 13, and 24 to clarify the distinction between the claimed optical and electrical connector interfaces and the network element port circuit to which those interfaces are coupled. Applicants respectfully submit that Abendschein provides no disclosure of a network element port circuit to which an optical and electrical connector interface is coupled. Indeed, Applicants submit that Abendschein

provides no disclosure of any circuitry beyond a printed circuit board that is part of the Abendschein connector, since Abendschein is directed toward a connector and not an interface. Such amendments are submitted to progress prosecution and are not intended to prejudice any future argument that Abendschein is not prior art to any invention herein presented, as presented in earlier responses to Office Action and which are incorporated herein by reference. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 1, 13, and 24, and all claims dependent thereon, are in condition for allowance and request Examiner's indication of same.

Claims 2 and 14 provide a further limitation that the "electrical connector interface comprises a registered jack 45 (RJ-45) interface." As discussed during the Examiner Interview and in response to the previous Office Action, Applicants submit that Abendschein provides no disclosure of an RJ-45 interface. Abendschein only discloses an electrical interface that is a printed circuit board (PCB) which is vertically and laterally movable within a connector and in the same housing as an optical connector. *See, e.g.,* Abendschein 1:68-2:10; 4:8-30. The electrical connector interface disclosed as element 13 in Figure 2 of Abendschein is configured to receive the disclosed PCB and not an RJ-45 connector. Further, an RJ-45 connector, as claimed, cannot provide the vertical and lateral movement required by Abendschein. During the Examiner Interview, the Examiner reviewed the Abendschein reference and agreed that such a disclosure was not present in the reference.

Therefore, for at least the above reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 2 and 14, and all claims dependent thereon (Claims 3-12 and 15-23), are in condition for allowance and request Examiner's indication of same.

Claims 5 and 17 provide a limitation that “an electrical isolation circuit [is] coupled to said RJ-45 interface.” As discussed during the Examiner Interview and in response to the previous Office Action, Applicants submit that Abendschein provides no disclosure of any electrical isolation circuit coupled to the electrical connector interface. As stated above, the Abendschein disclosure relates to a connector and not to an interface. Abendschein provides no disclosure of connections to a receptor beyond an electric signal being provided by an edge card. Without such disclosure, Abendschein cannot be said to anticipate Claims 5 and 17. During the Examiner Interview, the Examiner reviewed the Abendschein reference and agreed that such a disclosure was not present in the reference.

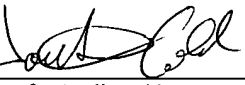
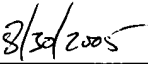
For at least the above reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 5 and 17, and all claims dependent thereon (Claims 6 and 18), are in condition for allowance and request Examiner’s indication of same.

In addition to the amendments discussed above, certain dependent claims have been amended to provide consistency with the independent claims upon which they depend. Claim 25 has also been added to the present application to further emphasize the distinction between the connector interfaces and the network element port circuit, which can include the claimed electrical isolation circuit.

For the above reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that all the pending claims, as amended, are in condition for allowance and Applicant respectfully requests indication of same.

**CONCLUSION**

The application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop RCE, Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on August 30, 2005.	
 _____ Attorney for Applicant(s)	 _____ Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted



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